

THE ATLANTIC COAST.

CHAPTER I.

CONDITION OF THE NAVY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR.

POLITICAL events of great gravity occurring in Kansas, which grew out of the repeal of the "Missouri Compromise," and later, the "John Brown raid" at Harper's Ferry in October, 1860, had familiarized the people of the United States with sectional hostility and bloodshed. The centres of direction of aggressive action were in the South, and of defence against them in the North. South Carolina had vauntingly sent her uniformed company "to defend her rights" far away from her own soil, and the North had sent arms and men to resist force by force.

The violent unquiet element of the South had fully determined that the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency was in itself a cause of war, and it had so organized and armed its forces as to bear down any reasonable consideration of the differences between the two sections; nay, more, it had, aided by the demagogues of that section, constrained the men of thought and of character to accept the action of these men as embodying their own ideas. In coming centuries the remarkable address of Alexander H. Stephens at

Milledgeville, Ga., on the 14th of November, 1860, will be read as a clear exposition of the actual political differences that were magnified by demagogues into what were urged as monstrous wrongs, and abuses that war only could terminate.

After the election of Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Buchanan, in his last message to Congress, favored, as far as he could, the attempted separation of the States, by denying "the right of coercion" to the general Government. During the remainder of his administration the heads of the Departments generally so disposed the officers, war material, and the naval vessels in commission, as to best serve the Confederates when hostilities became an actuality.

The unhappy days rolled on, and at length Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated. State after State passed acts of secession, and others that were actually prepared to follow, cried "no coercion" or, "neutrality" as the price of remaining in the Union.

At Cummings Point, the nearest land to Fort Sumter at the entrance to Charleston harbor, a battery had been erected during February and March, for the avowed purpose of reducing that work. When the attack was made, or rather after Fort Sumter had fallen, on the 13th of April, 1861, the President called on the different States to furnish 75,000 men for a period of three months. This was met by scorn and derision in all the bordering slave States, and Virginia at once passed her act of secession. Then it was, that the mask that had not concealed, and yet had been respected by the general Government, was thrown off by the conspirators. A prominent Navy officer then on duty at Washington said to those under him, even before this event, "The Government is virtually dissolved; there is the semblance of one, nothing more. Disorder reigns every-

where, except in the South, where a stable Government is already established, which will ere long receive acquisitions of membership in the States to which you belong. Mr. Lincoln will hardly attempt coercion, it would be *unconstitutional*. Would you meanly serve another people when your States have gone, even though no war grows out of the separation, or would you be base enough, for your selfish ends to do so, were there a war against the people from whom you have sprung, to whom you are allied, and whom you can now serve so well?"

For days and even weeks the Government at Washington gave no sign nor token, and when at last it did, insidious speciousness of presentation had done sad work. Many able and unselfish officers, without a thought of treason, or without desire to do wrong or to do violence to the Government, found themselves, rather unwittingly than venally, in the toils of the enemy. These conditions prevailed at Washington and Southward, both in the army and the navy. Those officers who were deemed most likely to be influenced to suit the ends of the conspirators, had been placed, as said before, within favoring districts.

On the 4th of March, 1861, Isaac Toucey of Connecticut, who had been Secretary of the Navy for the four previous years, was succeeded by Gideon Welles, of the same State. He remained in that position for the eight years following. At that date the chiefs of Bureaus were as follows: Of Yards and Docks, Captain Joseph Smith; of Construction, John Lenthal; of Provisions and Clothing, Horatio Bridge; of Ordnance and Hydrography, Captain George W. Magruder; of Medicine, Surgeon William Whelan. These officers had been incumbents for years, and remained throughout the Civil War, with the exception of Captain Magruder, a

Virginian, who remained in office, loyally serving the purposes of the inchoate Confederacy, until the seizure of the Norfolk Navy Yard, when he tendered his resignation, and was dismissed by the President as a recognition of unfaithful service.

Within a few days after the attack on Fort Sumter, of the 78 captains on the active list, 12 resigned or were dismissed ; of 114 commanders, 39 ; of 321 lieutenants, 73.¹

The Confederates had been organizing their forces for months, and menaced Washington, Fortress Monroe, and Norfolk Navy Yard. It was absolutely a matter of doubt under the actual circumstances whether they might not accomplish the possession of all of these places. It was of the utmost importance to the inchoate Confederacy to get possession of the Norfolk Navy Yard and secure the large amount of ordnance stored there and to establish a good line of defence.

Nothing could more effectually serve their purpose than the pretended loyalty of the officers remaining attached to the Navy Yard who effectively cajoled the Commandant, who was old and feeble, and actually distracted by reason of the turmoil. At the final moment he was left alone, without one officer, and with but 40 marines attached to the Yard to support his authority.

The attack on Fort Sumter and its surrender affected the people of the North and of the South quite differently ; while those who captured the fort boasted that they had " finished the war," the people of the North awoke to a painful realization of the fact that a war existed that must be fought to the end, and they girded up their loins as best they could ; but

¹ After the 4th of March, 259 officers of the navy resigned their commissions or have been dismissed the service (Report Secretary Navy, July 4, 1861). Many others, belonging to States that had already seceded, had previously resigned.

the North was long in attaining that intensity of purpose that is so potent when untrained bodies of troops meet in conflict. Fort Sumter was regarded in the public mind, North and South, as the citadel of the fortress, the incarnation of rebellion, and as such it was attacked and defended.

Failing in the fleet attack, with grim satisfaction, after a time the men of the North saw its walls crumble and fall from the fire of guns four thousand yards away, until from their point of view, it had no longer shape nor semblance of a fort, nor was a single piece of ordnance permitted to stand upon what had once been its walls ; but the satisfaction of the North was not complete until, in the most formal manner, the flag that had been hauled down, four years to the day and hour from that event, again floated over the mass of ruins known as Fort Sumter.

In the confusion at the North, growing out of numerous resignations hastily sent in, abandonment of duty on the part of others, and in some cases of treachery, it is not to be wondered that the Norfolk Navy Yard fell into the hands of the Confederates, with its three thousand cannon, its fine dry dock, numerous well-appointed workshops, material, and small arms. It is not too much to say now, that it should have been held at any cost of life, long enough at least to have destroyed the cannon, workshops, and ships.

There is an extenuating fact that may be stated as a partial justification of officers who were recreant. For half a century perhaps, there had existed a kind of culture of fealty to a State, instead of to the Government which they served ; it was paraded as a dogma, and was in a degree acknowledged by some officers from the South in the military service of the Government, more than half of whom, prior to the Civil War, either came from the slave States or had married within them. Able and educated men, acknowledging this "doc-

trine," thought they had only to resign to hopelessly embarrass the Government. There was certainly for a time great confusion, and in the case of the Norfolk Yard, great loss. The difficulties are very properly stated in the Report of the Secretary of the Navy, before referred to. "With so few vessels in commission on our coast, and our crews in distant seas, the Department was very indifferently prepared to meet the exigency that was rising. Every moment was closely watched by the disaffected, and threatened to precipitate measures that the country seemed anxious to avoid. Demoralization prevailed among the officers, many of whom, occupying the most responsible positions, betrayed symptoms of that infidelity that has dishonored the service."

Turning to the vessels of the navy in commission, we find that they had been placed as far as possible in positions to render them least available. On the 4th of March the home squadron consisted of twelve vessels, and of these only four were in Northern ports; two of these were small steamers, a third a sailing store-ship. The fourth had only a month before entered a Northern port; the commander, a South Carolinian, had loitered off the coast apparently undecided. After reaching port he remarked to an officer of the vessel that he had hesitated whether to obey his orders or go to Charleston, and was quite thunderstruck when told that his hesitation had been observed and he would have been put in irons had he made the attempt. Several of the vessels in Southern ports or at Vera Cruz were commanded by Southern officers, who it was supposed would deliver their vessels into the hands of the Confederates, but principle or policy was sufficient to spare such an attempted national disgrace.

The sailing frigate Sabine, 50 guns, the sailing sloop St. Louis, 20, and the steamers Brooklyn, 25, and Wyandotte, 5, were at Pensacola; and the sailing vessels Macedonian, 24,

Cumberland, 24, and the steamers Pocahontas, 5, and Powhatan, 11, were returning from Vera Cruz.

On the coast of Africa were the sailing sloops Constellation and Portsmouth, 22 guns each, the store-ship Relief, 2 guns, and the steamers Mohican, 6, Mystic, 5, Sumter, 5, and San Jacinto, 13. The steam frigate Niagara, 20, was returning from Japan, and arrived at Boston April 20th.

No one versed in naval matters can read the above disposition of force without feeling indignant at the fact that it was so placed solely to favor the conspirators. Those on the coast of Africa were out of the way of the receipt of orders, as is apparent from the fact that they were issued as soon as possible after the 4th of March, and it was not until the 15th of September that the first of these vessels reached the coast of the United States.

To the vessels in the Mediterranean the mails were more accessible ; the last of the three steam vessels there reached home July 3, 1861. The Richmond, 16, Susquehanna, 15, and Iroquois, 6 guns, were then available. The sailing frigate Congress, 50 guns, and the steamer Seminole came from the coast of Brazil, the last-named arriving home August 12th. From the East Indies, on December 30, 1861, the steamers Hartford, 16, Dacotah, 6, and sail sloop John Adams were *en route*. The steamers Pensacola, 19, fitting out at Washington, and Mississippi, 11 guns, at Boston, should be added as available. There were some old sailing vessels that might have been put in commission, but those in service were found of so little use that they were laid aside as steam vessels could be obtained. In rather indifferent condition in the Northern navy yards were the steam frigates Wabash, Minnesota, Colorado, and Roanoke, of 40 guns each. These last-named at as early a date as possible were put in commission and sent as a supporting force to vessels blockading

from Cape Hatteras to the Rio Grande, the far-off boundary with Mexico. To maintain even the appearance of a blockade over the harbors, sounds, and numberless inlets required the purchase of every vessel under the flag that had possibilities of usefulness.

At New York and Boston Navy Yards there were dry docks, and at each several ways for building ships, and at Portsmouth, N. H., and Philadelphia more limited facilities for construction. To supply the needs and waste of war required the employment of every shipbuilding yard in the land.

The personnel of the "old navy," as it was called, depleted as above described, was quite insufficient to meet the exigencies of the Civil War; instead of 5,000 men afloat, as before that event, no less than 50,000 were required. To officer these men, intelligent officers and seamen from the merchant service were sought, who, after passing examinations to establish their professional fitness, were given acting appointments in various grades. It is proper to add that as a whole they fairly fulfilled reasonable expectations, and after the war was over and passing other examinations, more than fifty of these volunteer officers, many of whom would do honor to any navy, entered the regular service under provisions of law.

Just previous to the Civil War our naval vessels were as well supplied with smooth-bore shell guns and with boat howitzers as any service afloat; this was effected with considerable difficulty by the late Rear-Admiral Dahlgren when in an inferior grade. The special value of rifled ordnance under certain conditions had not yet been properly established, and there were but few pieces afloat, but they soon formed a part of the battery of every vessel.

In pages that follow, the inferiority for service of vessels "improvised" for war purposes will become painfully appa-

rent. The machinery of steamers built for commercial purposes is far more exposed than of vessels designed to carry guns; the question of war is simply one of *relative strength* and preparation of the combatants; in that respect the National vessels in commission, as a whole, were immensely superior to those of the Confederates, or any that could be built and fitted for service within the limits of the Confederacy. The difference between a very vulnerable naval force and another still more so, was not only regarded with gratulation, but in sheer ignorance and vanity was magnified and expressed in the grandiloquent phrase that "the United States had the strongest navy in the world," when nine-tenths of the vessels bearing guns under the National flag would have been quite powerless to meet vessels of war of the same tonnage of any civilized nation. Toward the close of the war we had several double-turreted vessels of an improved Monitor type that were in their day by all odds the strongest vessels then afloat, yet at the present time they would be but "paper ships" under the fire of many vessels of nearly all of the navies of the world.

It is so pleasant to deceive ourselves, that now, when our flag waves over a wide and broad land, with its fifty-two millions of inhabitants, some of our legislators insist that "no nation would dare attack us." Others speak of "appropriating liberally for the building up of a navy" and then gravely propose the munificent sum of \$1,300,000 for the cruising navy and half that sum, more or less, to complete an improved Monitor. To the naval mind, or to the person who looks at forces relatively, there is something painfully ludicrous in such propositions. The men "who fought out the war" are rapidly passing away; their rude experiences, on both sides, now happily capable of serving a common and National purpose, will soon be wholly of the past. Then, in

wars that we invite, from a lack of preparation in what plight will we be on land or on the seas? To the old officer, whether of the land service or that of the sea, these are painful reflections; so far as he is individually concerned, for usefulness he has almost passed away; his experiences have taught him what a lack of practical experience and a want of preparation costs a nation in a struggle with another whose military and naval establishments are constant and trained to their duties.

Recognizing the necessity of professional education in the extremity of war, in May, 1861, the Secretary of the Navy applied for an assistant, and Gustavus V. Fox was appointed Assistant Secretary. He entered the naval service as midshipman in 1838, passed through the professional instruction existent, and the intervening grades, to that of lieutenant, and resigned in 1856 to engage in civil pursuits.

Abroad we had enemies who desired our downfall and aided it as far as could be done without openly declaring their hostility; so far as a lack of friendship was concerned, it applied quite as much to the South as to the North; nothing but probable complications nearer home, growing out of hostile interference, as well as the shame of attacking us without reasonable pretext, prevented "armed intervention," as it would have been called.

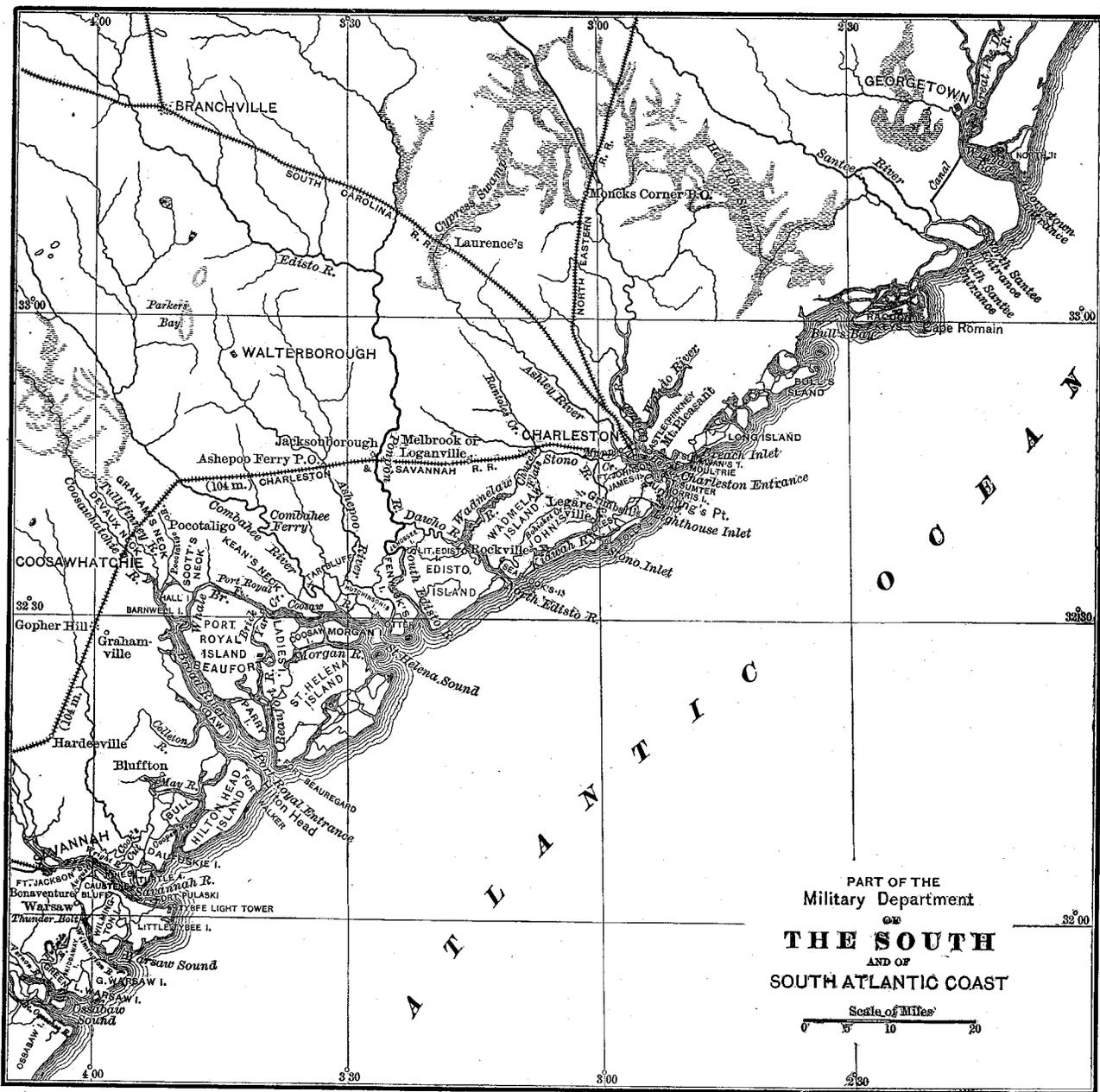
At home we had what were known as "sympathizers," spies, and even traitors in the civil services, who obtained the most accurate information of intended movements and gave it to the enemy. Certainly the skies were dark for years, yet through all the difficulties and shortcomings the nation supported its existence with fearful cost of life and treasure.

Beyond the Capes of Virginia and to Cape Florida, in relation to which this volume treats, a blockade, first of form

and later of fact, was being established, but so far as hostile guns of opposing forces were concerned within this region they opened first at Hatteras Inlet, more than four months after the war had taken definite shape. The capture of Hatteras Inlet seemed at first of little import to the military mind, but it grew in its proportions, and as will be seen by the following chapters, was no mean event, more important, too, from successive developments, for which it was the gateway.

From the time of the fall of Sumter vessels were prepared and despatched to blockade Charleston, and operations of this nature were extended as the means at hand permitted; it may be readily supposed, however, that until the capture of Port Royal, at least, it was rather nominal than real. If vessels were captured, even in entering the principal ports, it was due rather to the stupidity of the persons attempting to run the blockade than to the effectiveness of the force employed to prevent it. Should a vessel of ordinary or light draught be desired to reach Charleston, she could be taken into Stono, or North Edisto Inlets, or into any of the channels of St. Helena, or into Port Royal Harbor, and from thence in a few hours find her way into Charleston; and if desired to reach Savannah, and fearing to approach Tybee Bar, she could enter either Warsaw or Ossabaw Sound, and find her way to her destination without difficulty. To prevent all this, and eventually, effectively as far as possible, and for securing a military base of operations it was essential that a good port on the Southern coast should be seized and held, and for that purpose not one was more desirable in every point of view than Port Royal. As the Confederates had few vessels of war, and none when military operations began, the blockade of the coast, and effective aid to the army in the capture of forts, was naturally

regarded as the limit of usefulness of the navy, and when, at Port Royal, the guns of the navy alone secured the fall of the forts; then the army had to occupy and secure them against the attacks of the enemy, and naval guns then became subsidiary or auxiliary, within their power of action, to army operations, as well to strengthen military lines as to extend them as far as deemed practicable, to embarrass and hold in check as large a land force of the enemy as possible.



CHAPTER II.

THE PORT ROYAL EXPEDITION.

IN the early part of October, 1861, the steam frigate Wabash was sent from blockading duty to the harbor of New York, to fit for service as the flag-ship of a force destined to our Southern coast, for the purpose of capturing and holding some convenient Southern port to serve as a depot for coal and other supplies, for the use of the vessels maintaining the blockade of the many inlets, harbors, and sounds that lie along the coast from the northern limits of South Carolina to the southern cape of Florida, over which district, what was known as the South Atlantic blockading squadron held its watch. The possession of a harbor was essential to maintaining a proper blockade, as coaling in rough water, if not impossible, is at least a slow and difficult operation. To go around Cape Hatteras to Hampton Roads in order to coal, as had been the case, hundreds of miles from the blockaded ports, lessened the effectiveness of the blockade by the absence of a large number of vessels going and coming, and when they arrived out, much of the coal taken in was already exhausted.

On the 10th of October Flag-Officer Samuel Francis Dupont hoisted his flag on board of the Wabash, commanded by Commander C. R. P. Rodgers. Every effort was made on the part of the flag-officer and his staff to make necessary requisitions and get on board the necessary stores and fit-

ments required for the vessels of war, and for other vessels purchased for war purposes, few of which were adapted to carrying heavy batteries and to withstand the buffeting of rough seas, but they were the best to be had, and as a whole served the required purpose. This heterogeneous fleet of purchased vessels, ferry-boats, and freight steamers of small size, were despatched to Hampton Roads as soon as fitted, and the flag-ship, accompanied by the vessels of war proper, including four gunboats built on contract for completion in ninety days, left for the same destination on the afternoon of the 17th and arrived the day following, exercising at target practice during the passage. The XI-inch pivot guns on board of the gunboats were found handy and effective within their range.

Hampton Roads at that time was crowded with vessels of war, transports, and coaling schooners. Those destined for the command of Flag-Officer Dupont were supplied with stores and coal as soon as possible, as were also the numerous steam transports carrying some 12,000 men, under the command of General T. W. Sherman, with provisions and army outfits of all kinds. A steamer called the Governor, suitable for inland waters rather than to the sea, having on board a battalion of marines numbering 600, under the command of Major John G. Reynolds, was also attached to the expedition.

After receiving sealed orders as to destination—to be opened only in the event of separation—this motley force, numbering fifty vessels, steamed out of Hampton Roads on the morning of the 29th of October. There was considerable delay in forming a double echelon line outside of Cape Henry, and then the fleet proceeded slowly toward Cape Hatteras. The day previous to this force leaving, the flag-officer had despatched twenty-five coal-laden schooners relieved in part of their cargoes, under convoy of the sail sloop

of war *Vandalia*, with orders to rendezvous off Tybee Bar in the event of parting company. This with the view of concealing the destination of the fleet.

At 1 A.M. of the 31st the breeze was fresh from the eastward, and the sea rough. Owing to the set of the current and by getting too far to leeward, two of the transports struck lightly on Hatteras shoals, when, with a view to their safety, they all steamed out to the eastward, causing some confusion. After passing Hatteras the course was shaped along the coast. At noon on the 1st, a dull heavy sky and southeasterly wind, constantly increasing, gradually settled into a heavy gale. In the afternoon, the flag-officer made signal that the vessels would take care of themselves. As darkness settled over a stormy sea they were seen here and there under such storm sail as their commanding officers directed.

It was an anxious night; a furious gale swept the waters, and as many of the vessels were certainly indifferent sea boats, grave apprehensions arose as to their safety. The gunboats behaved well, which had been doubted from their motions in rough water when in Hampton Roads.

Throughout the night, which was very dark, the driven drops of rain struck the face roughly as pellets when keeping a look-out to windward, and phosphorescent animalculæ lit up the sheet of foam that covered the rough sea. At 3 A.M. the wind, without abating in violence, hauled suddenly to the westward and the vessels felt more than ever the force of the sea. When broad daylight came, only one gunboat was in sight from the masthead of the flag-ship. As the day advanced several others came in view and followed in her wake. The *Wabash*, and such other of the vessels as were properly fitted, were under sail and using steam as necessary to maintain position. The wind was from the west and the vessels were "by the wind on the port tack," that is to say,

the course was toward Bull's Bay, one of the ports supposed desirable to occupy as a coaling and supply station. At 9 P.M. the Wabash tacked ship and headed southwest, the wind having changed some two points. It was apparent, then, to the commanders of such vessels as had not opened their instructions, that Bull's Bay was not the objective point, but that it was probably Port Royal, having a more central position, and was well known to be the best harbor for vessels of heavy draught along the whole coast.

On the forenoon of the 3d, the flag-ship made signal for the commanding officer of the Seneca to come on board. A letter for Captain J. L. Lardner, commanding the steam frigate Susquehanna, off Charleston, was given him, as also verbal instructions that the vessels designated would not leave the blockade of the harbor until nightfall; they were then to proceed to the entrance of Port Royal, where the vessels of the fleet were concentrating, and where Flag-Officer Dupont would be found.

The Seneca proceeded on her way to Charleston Bar, some thirty miles distant. No sooner had she been sighted from Fort Sumter, than a signal gun was fired, and repeated farther in, probably to announce the arrival of the fleet of which this vessel was the *avant courier*. Immediately after the capture of Port Royal it was well known that the Confederates had been correctly informed as to the destination, although it was only determined a few days before, and was supposed to be a profound secret.¹

¹ RICHMOND, November 1, 1861.

Governor Pickens, Columbia, S. C. : I have just received information which I consider entirely reliable, that the enemy's expedition is intended for Port Royal.

J. P. BENJAMIN,

Acting Secretary of War.

[Same telegram sent to Generals Drayton and Ripley.]—Vol. VI., p. 306, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion.

Flag-Officer Dupont, in writing to the Secretary of the Navy, on the 6th of November, the day preceding the battle, says: "Upon taking into consideration the magnitude to which the joint naval and military expedition had been extended, to which you (the Secretary of the Navy) have called my attention, I came to the conclusion that the original intention of the Department, if first carried out, would fall short of the expectations of the country and of the capabilities of the expedition, while Port Royal I thought would meet both in a high degree."¹

Notwithstanding the violence of the gale, it was ascertained that only one vessel attached to the naval force, the steam transport Governor, had been lost, and that all save seven of the persons on board had been rescued, through the exertions of the officers and crew of the sail frigate Sabine, Captain Cadwalader Ringgold, aided specially and greatly by the Isaac Smith, Lieutenant-Commander Nicholson. In the heavy gale the last-named vessel would have foundered, had not the broadside guns been thrown overboard. The hog braces of the Governor had first given way, then she lost her smokestack, and finally the use of the enginery. It was a lucky chance that of her human cargo, numbering 650 or more, so few were lost.

¹ This plainly indicates that the Department had left to Dupont the selection of the point of attack, to be agreed upon, however, with General T. W. Sherman, whose orders, dated August 2, 1861, are as follows: "You will proceed to New York immediately, and organize, in connection with Captain Dupont, of the navy, an expedition of 12,000 men. Its destination you and the naval commander will determine after you have sailed." . . .

The "confidential" order of October 12th, to the flag-officer, says: "In examining the various points upon the coast, it has been ascertained that Bull's Bay, St. Helena, Port Royal, and Fernandina are each and all accessible and desirable points for the purposes indicated, and the Government has decided to take possession of at least two of them. Which of the two shall thus be occupied will be committed to your discretion after obtaining the best information you can in regard to them." . . .

The Peerless, an army transport laden with stores, was discovered in a sinking condition by the steam sloop Mohican, Commander S. W. Godon, and the crew rescued. In effecting this, Lieutenant H. W. Miller of the Mohican was very highly mentioned by the captain.

It is sufficient to say that certain naval vessels that came down in the fleet were detailed to relieve the war vessels proper blockading off Charleston, and that during the forenoon of the 5th all the vessels that were expected had assembled at the rendezvous with the exception of the Pocahontas, mentioned hereafter, and that all of the army transports arrived before the attack on the 7th, with the exception of the Peerless, already reported as lost, and the Belvidere, Union, and Osceola, none of them having troops on board, but army equipment and supplies, whose failure to arrive seriously affected army movements and also the means of transportation.

The bar of Port Royal lies ten miles from the nearest low sandy shores which form the land-locked harbor; only the tops of the taller trees are visible, except in certain states of the atmosphere when the mirage brings up to view continuous forests on Hilton Head to the west, and Bay Point on the east side of the harbor. Several of the vessels of war, among them the gunboats and the surveying steamer Vixen, were directed to feel their way in with the lead, and buoy out the bar, and secure the safe entrance of the heavier vessels. This was effected by 3 P.M., and all vessels of the fleet having a draught not exceeding eighteen feet, entered forthwith, and anchored some five miles outside of the headlands, in good holding ground, and fairly sheltered by shoals to seaward. Flag-Officer Dupont says: "To the skill of Commander Davis, the fleet captain, and Mr. Boutelle, the able assistant of the coast survey, in charge of the steamer

Vixen, the channel was immediately found, sounded out and buoyed."

Seamen will appreciate this celerity of movement, and the fact that on the first high tide thereafter all of the vessels were taken within the bar.

The gunboats Ottawa, Seneca, Pembina, and Penguin had anchored, after aiding in sounding out the channel, only some three miles outside of the headlands upon which the earthworks were plainly visible without the aid of a glass. Near sunset three steamers came out from between the headlands, and at long range opened fire on these vessels. They were soon under way, stood toward the enemy's vessels, commanded by Commodore Josiah Tatnall, formerly of the U. S. Navy, and opening fire, soon caused them to retreat.

Shortly after sunrise the following day (the 5th), the same manœuvre was repeated by the enemy. Just at this time Commander John Rodgers, accompanied by Brigadier-General H. G. Wright, had gone on board of the Ottawa for the purpose of making a reconnoissance of the batteries of the enemy. The Ottawa made signal to the Seneca, the Curlew, and the Isaac Smith to follow, and standing in, opened fire on Tatnall's steamers, and drove them within the headlands, coming themselves within a distant cross-fire from Fort Walker on Hilton Head, and Fort Beauregard on Bay Point. Flag-Officer Dupont says: "These vessels made a reconnoissance in force, and drew the fire of the batteries on Hilton Head and Bay Point sufficiently to show that the fortifications were works of strength, and scientifically constructed." In this affair the rigging of the gunboats was considerably cut by the shells from the earthworks, but no other damage was sustained. They had the satisfaction of noting an explosion at Bay Point, which General Drayton stated in his report to have been caused by a rifle-shell striking a caisson.

About noon a single steamer of the enemy came out, and at long range opened fire on the nearest vessel, but soon left on receiving a ricochet XI-inch shell from the Seneca, which lodged in the hog braces, as was known later. The failure of the fuze, doubtless, prevented serious results.

At 11 A.M. the flag-ship crossed the bar and anchored some five miles from the forts; she was followed by the Susquehanna and the heavy army transports, which anchored somewhat farther out. Signal was made for the commanding officers of vessels to come on board the flag-ship. On entering the cabin of the flag-officer they were made acquainted with the plan of battle, and instructions were given them as to their position in line.

The vessels designated for the attack were of course quite ready, but the day was well advanced when the special instructions had been given and the necessary buoys planted, particularly on Fishing-rip Shoal. The flag-officer says: "This rendered the hour late before it was possible to move with the attacking squadron. In our anxiety to get the outline of the forts before dark, we stood in too near this shoal, and the ship grounded. By the time she was gotten off it was too late, in my judgment, to proceed, and I made signal for the squadron to anchor out of gunshot of the enemy."

The day following a heavy westerly wind prevailed; although the water was not rough, an attack would have been made at great disadvantage. The morning of the day following was calm and beautiful. In his report of the battle and abandonment of Port Royal, General Drayton, who commanded the Confederate forces, says: "On the 6th instant, the fleet and transports, which had increased to about forty-five sail, would probably have attacked us had not the weather been very boisterous. . . . At last the memorable 7th dawned upon us, bright and serene; not a ripple upon

the broad expanse of water to disturb the accuracy of fire from the broad decks of that magnificent armada about advancing, in battle array, to vomit forth its iron hail, with all the spiteful energy of long-suppressed rage and conscious strength."

At early dawn of the 7th signal was made from the flag-ship "go to breakfast," and after the usual time given, the signals "get under way," "form line of battle," and "prepare for action," followed in due time. The vessels of war were then lying more than four miles outside of a straight line connecting the earthworks, situated, as General Drayton states, two and five-eighths miles apart and soon to be the objects of attack. The commanding officers of vessels, previously instructed, on weighing anchor took position in lines as follows: Main column, flag-ship *Wabash* leading, Commander C. R. P. Rodgers; side-wheel steam frigate *Susquehanna*, Captain J. S. Lardner; sloop *Mohican*, Commander S. W. Godon; sloop *Seminole*, Commander J. P. Gillis; sloop *Pawnee*, Lieutenant-Commanding R. H. Wyman; gunboat *Unadilla*, Lieutenant-Commanding Napoleon Collins; gunboat *Ottawa*, Lieutenant-Commanding Thomas H. Stevens; gunboat *Pembina*, Lieutenant-Commanding John P. Bankhead, and sail-sloop *Vandalia*, Commander Francis S. Haggerty, towed by the *Isaac Smith*, Lieutenant-Commanding J. W. A. Nicholson. It will be remembered that the last-named vessel, to prevent foundering, had thrown her broadside guns overboard in the gale of the 1st.

The flanking column consisted of the *Bienville*, Commander Charles Steedman, leading; the gunboat *Seneca*, Lieutenant-Commanding Daniel Ammen; gunboat *Penguin*, Lieutenant-Commanding P. A. Budd, and the *Augusta*, Commander E. G. Parrott.

At half-past eight the vessels were as fairly in position as

attainable when not under good steerage way, and as they steamed ahead at nine, signal was made for close order, and the line of battle was fairly developed, at distances intended, of a little more than a ship's length apart, the flanking column appearing through the intervals, as it were, and at a distance from the other line of a ship's length. The reader will bear in mind the ample sheet of water between the earthworks. The order given was, that the main column, in passing in, should deliver its fire on Fort Walker (Hilton Head) and the flanking column on Fort Beauregard; when the vessels had passed within where the guns could no longer be trained on the works of the enemy, the main column would turn toward Hilton Head, pass again toward the sea and against the flood tide, steam quite slowly, delivering their fire, and when again reaching a point where their guns could no longer be brought to bear on the batteries of the enemy, the vessels would be turned toward mid-channel, and pass as in going in first, following the flag-ship in line. This made the vessels describe an ellipse, the curves of which, in relation to the distance from Fort Walker, were chosen by the flag-ship. In passing in, the shortest distance from Fort Walker was probably about eight hundred yards, and heading outward is given as six hundred yards. This evolution was to be continuous until the reduction of the fort, or until further orders.

The flanking column was to deliver its fire in passing in on the Bay Point batteries, then turn its attention to the force of the enemy afloat, and after sinking or driving it away, take up a position to the north of Fort Walker, the best attainable to enfilade that work. In giving these instructions the flag-officer stated that he knew Tatnall well; he was an officer of courage and plan, and that it was not at all unlikely in the heat of action and smoke of battle he

would endeavor to pass out and destroy the transports, and the vital duty of the flanking column was to take care of Tatnall, and destroy his vessels if he attempted that movement.

With these explanations the reader is prepared to consider the vessels with a speed of six miles per hour, fairly formed in two columns and at 9.26 coming within long range of the earthworks, when the enemy opened. The force of Commodore Tatnall lay just within an imaginary line connecting the two forts. The vessels composing it were poorly adapted for successfully opposing those advancing and now within fair range of the earthworks. Tatnall's were what are known as "river steamers," extremely vulnerable, boilers and machinery fully exposed, and the guns carried, although rifled, were of inferior calibre.

The vessels entering were not long in replying to the guns of the enemy; with carefully studied elevations and well-directed aim, the heavy shells fell fast within the earthworks, burying themselves and exploding, throwing sand into the guns, covering platforms and gun-traverses with sand, and disturbing much the accuracy of aim and rapidity of fire of the enemy.

As the columns advanced, Tatnall's steamers withdrew, but when the main column turned they again put their bows toward the fleet, perhaps under the impression that the vessels found the fire from the earthworks too heavy to be borne, and were withdrawing. However that may be, seeing the vessels again returning, the Seneca was again headed toward them from a position just reached north of Fort Walker, and on her opening fire, they entered Scull Creek, the entrance to which has no great depth and is intricate; it is situated four miles northwest of Fort Walker.

The Wabash, followed closely by the Susquehanna, swept

again slowly and majestically in face of the earthworks at a distance not exceeding six hundred yards, delivering with accuracy and great dexterity their heavy broadsides. Having passed beyond the point which would admit of training the guns, again they turned, and heading into the harbor continued their broadsides. This was too much for troops not habituated to the use of heavy guns nor trained to war. Before the vessels entered, they saw in the cannon which they served what they fancied and believed a sufficient means to sink or destroy a fleet, and yet, with painful slowness and automaton-like regularity it swept around, delivering broadsides of shells with surprising rapidity, exploding them on the parapets and within their works, covering them up alive, as it were, in what they called their "sacred soil." Their guns were struck and broken or dismounted, guns' crews killed or wounded, and the mighty engines of yesterday seemed to have no potency to-day, wielded as they supposed deftly, but in reality clumsily. They saw the vessels were not impeded and did their will.

There is a force in the logic of war. Indisputably rude it is, yet more powerful than that of the bar, or even that of the pulpit; in undisciplined troops it addresses itself specially to what is equivocally called the "meanest comprehension."

To the battering force in front, that passed along in grim procession, was added the enfilading fire, described by General Drayton as follows: "Besides this moving battery, the fort was enfiladed by the gunboats anchored to the north off the mouth of Fish Hall Creek, and another on an edge of the shoal to the south. This enfilading fire on so still a sea annoyed and damaged us excessively, particularly as we had no gun on either flank of the bastion to reply with, for the 32-pounder on the right flank was shattered by a round shot, and on the north flank, for want of a car-

riage, no gun was mounted. After the fourth fire, the X-inch columbiad bounded over the hurter, and became useless. The 24-pounder rifled was choked while ramming down a shell, and lay idle during nearly the whole engagement."

"The vigorous attack of the enemy continued unabated, with still no decided damage to any of their ships. At half-past twelve I again went out of the fort with my Assistant-Adjutant-General, Captain Young, for the purpose of mustering together the infantry and reserves, and have them in readiness for any eventuality. Before leaving, however, I turned over the command to Colonel Heyward, with directions to hold out as long as any effective fire could be maintained."

"Having mounted our horses, we rejoined the troops near Hospital Number 2. I received information through one of the videttes that a steamer and small boats were sounding near the beach. I detached Captain Berry with three companies of his battalion under the guidance of Captain Ephraim Barnard, volunteer aid, by a road marked R, to watch the enemy, beat them back if they attempted to land, and give notice if he wanted support. I then, with some of my staff, rode to collect together the other troops, who, through ignorance of our inland roads, had lost their way, and had not yet come up."

General Drayton was misinformed as to a steamer and boats sounding north of Fort Walker. The Seneca was returning from the direction of Scull Creek, as near to the shore as the depth of water would allow, and as usual, men were sounding on each side of the vessel. Some of the enemy stupidly fired at the vessel, and although they were unseen the smoke marked the spot; 20-pounder rifle shells were returned, with loss of life to the enemy, as the reports show.

The reader will perceive the painful perplexity of General

Drayton at this moment ; he doubtless had the apprehension, if not an entire conviction, that the earthworks would soon be abandoned. His report says : "Two o'clock had now arrived, when I noticed our men coming out of the fort, which they had bravely defended for four and a half hours against fearful odds, and then only retiring when all but three of the guns on the water front had been disabled, and only five hundred pounds of powder in the magazine ; commencing the action with 220 men inside the fort, afterward increased to 255, by the accession of Read's battery. These heroic men retired slowly and sadly from their well-fought guns, which to have defended longer would have exhibited the energy of despair rather than the manly pluck of the soldier."

At the time of the occurrences first quoted, several of the vessels of the main line took up positions to the northeast of Fort Walker at a distance of twelve hundred yards or more ; the *Vandalia*, in tow of the *Isaac Smith* by a long hawser, swept in long, graceful, but inconvenient curves, past and among these vessels. The *Unadilla*, whose enginery was disabled, pursued her eccentric orbit, her commanding officer hailing and requesting other vessels to get out of the way as "he could not stop." As he swept by again and again the droll song of the man with the cork-leg that would not let him tarry was brought to mind.

Before the close of the bombardment, the *Pocahontas*, Commander Percival Drayton, entered the harbor, and taking position opened fire on Fort Walker. The vessel had received injuries in the gale of the 1st which delayed her reaching Port Royal at an earlier hour. Her commander was the brother of General Drayton, from whose report quotations have been made.

The report of Flag-Officer Dupont states that at 1.15 P.M. the *Ottawa* made signal that the works at Hilton Head had

been abandoned, and that the same signal was soon after made by the Pembina. At that time, the enfilading vessels north of Fort Walker, drifting with the ebb tide, were within five hundred or six hundred yards of the works, and in addition to the XI-inch guns were using the 20-pounder rifles and 24-pounder howitzers.

In his report the flag-officer says: "After the Wabash and the Susquehanna had passed to the northward, and given the fort the fire of their port battery the third time, the enemy had entirely ceased to reply and the battle was ended. . . . As soon as the starboard guns of this ship and the Susquehanna had been brought to bear a third time upon Fort Walker, I sent Commander John Rodgers on shore with a flag of truce. The hasty flight of the enemy was visible, and was reported from the tops. At 2.20 Captain Rodgers hoisted the flag of the Union over the deserted post."

At 2.45 the flag-ship anchored, and Commander C. R. P. Rodgers was ordered on shore with a detachment of seamen and marines, who threw out pickets and guarded Fort Walker until the arrival of General H. G. Wright. The transports came in from their anchorage, and by nightfall a brigade had landed and the fort was formally turned over to General Wright by order of the flag-officer.

Soon after the fate of Fort Walker was decided the flag-officer "despatched a small squadron to Fort Beauregard to reconnoitre, and ascertain its condition, and to prevent the rebel steamers returning to carry away either persons or property."

Captain Elliott, in command of Fort Beauregard, reports to Colonel Donavant, commandant of the post on Bay Point, as follows: "The last gun from my battery was fired at 3:35 P.M., being the eighth to which the enemy had not replied. A few moments afterward Colonel Donavant entered the fort and

said to me, 'Captain Elliott, what is the condition of things over the river?' I replied, 'Fort Walker has been silenced, sir.' 'By what do you judge?' 'By the facts that the fort has been subjected to a heavy enfilade and direct fire, to which it has ceased to reply, that the vessels having terminated their fire, the flag-ship has steamed up and delivered a single shot, which was unanswered, and that thereupon cheering was heard from the fleet.' 'Then, sir, it having been proved that these works could not accomplish the end for which they were designed—that of protecting the harbor—you will prepare to retire from a position from which our retreat may readily be cut off, and which our small force will not enable us to hold against a land attack.' I then prepared my command for a retreat, destroyed the greater part of the powder, spiked the guns, and an hour later took up the line of march for Eddings's Island." So the troops on Bay Point also stole away, without giving themselves the trouble to fold their tents.

About 4 P.M. an officer who had landed near Fort Walker met the body-servant of General Drayton and took him on board the flag-ship for personal examination. It was then ascertained, if not known before, that the Confederate troops could escape from Hilton Head Island by means of the steamboats that had entered Scull Creek, there being a wharf about one mile from the entrance. It was supposed, naturally enough, with a march which General Drayton gives as six miles from the fort to the wharf, that before a force could get through the intricate channel of Scull Creek, the embarkation would have been completed, which was not the case, however, as we learn from General Drayton's report that it was not fully effected until 1.30 A.M. of the 8th.

Not seeing the Seminole, that had been sent over to guard the approach from Bay Point—that vessel having by mistake

gone up Broad River—as darkness set in the flag-officer ordered the Seneca to proceed to the vicinity of Bay Point, communicate with the Seminole and inform her commander that at daylight he would make a careful reconnoissance of the Bay Point batteries, and if found abandoned, would land and hoist the flag over the works.

At daylight the Seminole was not found in the vicinity of Bay Point. After a sufficient inspection the commanding officer of the Seneca landed with thirty armed men and hoisted the flag of the Union on the flag-staff over a small frame house near the earthworks, which had been the headquarters of the enemy. He went into the house without a suspicion of possible injury, and found everything had been removed. The earthworks and magazines were hastily examined, and the encampment under the pine trees half a mile distant was then visited; the tents were standing undisturbed and within them many personal effects, wearing apparel, private arms, and some small arms were also found, which showed that when the enemy left they had not stood much on the order of their going. A single wounded soldier was found in a tent. The only animate life visible was a flock of turkeys that had the good taste to remain; they strutted around in stately pride and in the belief that they were superior birds—as indeed they were.

Returning to the vicinity of the earthworks, where our flag had been hoisted an hour before, a dull explosion was heard, a cloud of smoke went up, and when it passed away there was no vestige of the small frame house upon which our flag had been hoisted. A sailor walking near had fallen into the snare by his foot striking a wire fastened to a peg, through which a “spur tube” had exploded a quantity of powder placed under the floor of the house. The sailor was knocked down and stunned for a few minutes, after which he was able

to get up and walk off. So much for so mean a mode of warfare.

It was curious to observe the inherent love of plunder that takes possession of the victor. Articles absolutely useless, as a feather-bed and quilts, were brought down to the beach from the tents on Bay Point; had there been a bedstead in camp some fool would have brought that also. If it had been permitted, the vessels would have been filled with trash, for no other reason than that "to the victors belong the spoils."

The vicinity of the magazine was avoided, and the facts reported to General I. I. Stevens, to whom the works were turned over on his arrival with his troops at noon.

The armament and character of the earthworks of the enemy which the navy had captured are described in Lieutenant Barnes's official report as follows :

FORT WALKER.—Upon the sea front of said fort there are mounted, upon the best improved modern barbette carriages, circular railways, the following guns : One VI-inch rifled gun (right angle sea face) in good order ; six 32-pounders, of 62 hundred weight each ; one has the cascabel knocked off, three are dismantled, and carriages ruined—all loaded and generally in good order ; one X-inch columbiad, 13,220 pounds weight, in good order ; one VIII-inch columbiad, 9,018 pounds weight ; three sea-coast howitzers, VII-inch, 1,600 pounds weight, in good order, loaded ; one rifled VI-inch, in good order, loaded (in left angle of sea front)—at or surrounding each gun ammunition is placed in great profusion ; five large chests filled with powder for the various guns in front of them ; shot, shell, and rifled projectiles are scattered about without limit ; in the centre of the fort are two furnaces for hot shot, and one pump with water. In the left wing are : one 32-pounder, one sea-coast howitzer, not mounted, in good order. Outer work, in rear, commanding land approach, are mounted two 32-pounders in good order ; one VIII-inch heavy howitzer, mounted on navy carriage, loaded with canister, just put up, commanding approach to angle of outer work, the only gun in embrasure ; ammunition-chest full ; one English siege gun, 12-pounder, behind embankment at right of right

wing; one ditto, mounted to the right of the magazine to command the ditch of the main work. In the right wing are mounted three 32-pounders, making a total of twenty-three guns. There are also, in the covered way leading to the shell-room and magazine, about two hundred and fifty X-inch, one hundred VIII-inch shells, some loaded and fixed with sabots and straps; fifty 42-pounder shot, fifty boxes (four shell in each) rifled VI-inch shell of three patterns; three hundred VIII-inch and VI-inch canister, rammers, sponges, primers, and tools of all descriptions. The magazine door, being locked, was not entered.

FORT BEAUREGARD, on Bay Point, has four faces, upon which guns are mounted, each face looking on the water, and each gun so mounted as to command the water approach to Broad and Beaufort Rivers. The guns are thirteen in number, of the following sizes: five 32-pounders; one rifled VI-inch, new (gun burst and carriage entirely destroyed); five sea-coast guns, 42-pounders, long and very heavy, all in good order; one X-inch columbiad, weight 13,226 pounds (spiked and loaded); one VIII-inch columbiad, in good order. There is also, upon each flank of the main work, at a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards from it, a small work, built to command the land approach along the beach, as well as the channel abreast. Upon the outer works on the left flank are mounted two 24-pounders. Upon the outer works on the right flank are mounted three 32-pounders. Within the fort are also two field-pieces, VI-pounders, old Spanish pattern, making, in all, twenty pieces of ordnance. Within the fort was found a great amount of ammunition scattered about in disorder. In the shell-room were several hundred shells, filled and fused for the various sizes of guns. The magazine is filled with powder, put in cylinders ready for use; the powder appears to be of most excellent quality. There are two furnaces for heating shot, both filled with shot, some of them partly melted. The ammunition-chests are nearly full of powder. In a pool of water in the rear large quantities of ammunition are lying, where it was thrown by the enemy before retreating.

At Braddock's Point, at the far end of Hilton Head Island, the enemy abandoned one X-inch columbiad and two 5½-inch rifled guns, and near the wharf, in retreat, left two fine 12-pounder bronze howitzers.

In the attempted defence of these works General Drayton

reported casualties as follows : Killed in Fort Walker, 10 ; wounded, 20 ; killed in Colonel De Saussure's regiment, 1 ; wounded severely, 15 ; missing, 4 ; wounded in Fort Beauregard, 13.

The total of casualties on board of all of the vessels is given by the flag-officer as follows : Total killed, 8 ; wounded seriously, 6 ; wounded slightly, 17.

The earthworks had not traverses of the height that the enemy learned to make thereafter, which served him so well at Fort Fisher and elsewhere. Looking from the direction of the enfilading fire from the north at Fort Walker, the wonder was that the ammunition at the guns had not been exploded, and that many more of the men who served the guns were not killed. It seemed almost a miracle that explosions did not occur in the passage-way from which powder and shells were supplied.

It will be remembered that Fort Beauregard was not the direct object of attack. In entering the harbor, the flanking column alone delivered its fire in that direction, and afterward in passing to the northward the Wabash and Susquehanna gave it some shells.

General T. W. Sherman, commanding our troops of the Port Royal expedition, in his report of November 8th, says : "The beautifully constructed work on Hilton Head was severely crippled and many of the guns dismantled. Much slaughter had evidently been made there, many bodies having been buried in the fort, and some twenty or thirty were found some half mile distant. . . . On clearing out the fort the body of Doctor Buist, surgeon of the fort, was found ; he was killed by a shell and buried by the falling in of a parapet. The number of pieces of ordnance that have fallen into our hands is fifty-two, the bulk of which is of the largest calibre, all with fine carriages, etc., except eight or

nine, that were ruined by our fire, which dismounted their pieces."

In speaking of the transports he says: "The transport steamers Union, Belvidere, Osceola, and Peerless have not arrived (on the 8th). Two of them are known to be lost, and it is probable they all are. It is gratifying, however, to say that none of the troop transports connected with the land forces were lost, though the Winfield Scott had to sacrifice her whole cargo, and the Roanoke a portion of her cargo to save the lives of the regiments on board. The former will be unable to again put to sea."

The loss of these army transports, all of them of light draught, interfered seriously with the intended movements of our troops immediately after the battle of Port Royal, and the lack of shells for the large guns of the smaller navy vessels imposed quiet upon them for a time.

On the afternoon of the 8th General T. W. Sherman made a reconnoissance several miles up the Beaufort River on board of the Seneca. Lumps and bluffs and ruined houses had the semblance of concealed batteries, but there were none; the preparations for defence by the enemy were confined to the works captured, so far as the waters of Port Royal Harbor and the creeks and rivers were concerned. The same day all of the troops yet on board of the transports were debarked, mostly on Hilton Head, and the construction of a large entrenched camp was immediately begun.

The navy vessels for the most part that had been engaged in the attack on Port Royal were sent at once to blockade duty, leaving the smaller gunboats to an examination of the internal waters, and soon after, the harbors in the vicinity. The Unadilla was sent up Broad River, and the Seneca, Pembina, and Penguin went to Beaufort, under the supposition still that guns would be found in position, in

which case the orders were to get out of the range of them and acquaint the flag-officer, that a proper force might be sent for their reduction. On reaching a marshy island half a mile below Beaufort there was a great commotion ; a crowd of persons and several men on horseback left hastily ; crowds of negroes were in the streets, others plundering the houses, and loading every scow and boat that they could lay their hands on. They were wild with joy, and had, in their belief, wealth that should satiate desire. Only one white man was found, a Mr. Allen, who was brought on board. He appeared to be suffering from some strong excitement or the effects of liquor. After giving to him assurances of protection to life and property, which the flag-officer had directed to be given to peaceable inhabitants, he was sent on shore.

On the return of the vessels to Port Royal they were boarded by boat crews of negroes, who stated that many of the slaves had been shot by their masters in endeavoring to escape being driven off the island. They were informed that they were free to go to Beaufort or to Hilton Head ; they said they would first go to Beaufort and afterward would come to Hilton Head, as would all of the blacks, to escape being murdered by their masters. The mail taken from the post office was delivered to the fleet captain, who found curiously vindictive letters ; earnest hopes that the fleet had gone down in the heavy gale that had swept the coasts, or if any survived and entered the port that none were to be left afloat, and thus they would wipe out the disgrace of Hatteras Inlet !

At the headquarters of General Drayton a chart of the coast was found on which were marked in red, points in different harbors which were conjectured, rightly, to indicate the positions of batteries ; this information proved of great value to the flag-officer in directing operations along the coast.

No white persons were in Beaufort, nor indeed upon the island, and the negroes were enjoying, in the stereotyped language of the Irish orator, "the proudest and the happiest day of their existence." The South Carolinians had agreed among themselves, or rather the more violent and dictatorial had proclaimed, that any communication with the National forces should be considered an act of treason; that every inhabitant must remove himself and family beyond the limits of our occupation. This entailed widespread misery on all concerned, but fortunately it fell principally upon those who had been active in bringing about the rebellion. The wretchedness resulting was not the less distressing because it was self-imposed, inasmuch as, if non-combatants had remained, they would not have been molested or interfered with in any manner. The object, probably, of this insane action was to prevent any weakening of the feeling of intense bitterness which was apparent from everything written or uttered at that time.

Commander John Rodgers in the Flag, with the Seneca and Pocahontas, was directed to proceed to the Savannah River and "push his reconnoissance so as to form an approximate estimate of the force on Tybee Island, and of the possibility of gaining an entrance." A day or so before he had made a partial examination from beyond the bar, and arrived at the supposition that the earthworks guarding the entrance had been abandoned. Arriving at noon of November 24th, he found the bar quite rough and the ranges for crossing it destroyed. He therefore went on board of the vessel having the least draught, crossed the bar, and shelled the earthworks without receiving a reply. A closer examination showed that they had been abandoned and dismantled, as was found to be the case at all of the points along the coast

within ready and an unembarrassed attack by the gunboats, with the exception of the little inlet of Stono, close to Charleston, and of course the defences of that city and of Savannah.

While Commander Rodgers was making his reconnoissance in one direction, other officers with proper vessels were sent elsewhere, with the same objects and like results. Commander Drayton in the Pawnee, to which he had been transferred, accompanied by the Pembina and the coast survey steamer Vixen, entered St. Helena Sound on the morning of the 26th. On the point of Otter Island was found an abandoned bastioned work, triangular in shape, with two faces looking upon the water, and surrounded by a ditch. The magazine had been blown up and the armament removed.

Continuing his reconnoissance up the Coosaw, at the mouth of Barnwell's Creek was found another deserted redoubt, which had an armament of three guns; one had been removed and the others destroyed. The carriages, a sling cart, and intrenching tools that were found were taken on board of the vessels.

Commander Drayton, with the Pembina and Vixen, some four miles up the Ashepoo found another deserted earthwork; its armament, save three small guns, had been removed; two of these had already been destroyed and the third was put in like condition.

Commander Drayton recommended that the fort on Otter Island be occupied, as it commanded the inland route to Charleston. No single point commanded all of the entrances to St. Helena Sound, as it is five miles across. The Otter Island fort would command the best entrance, and its vicinity would give excellent anchorage for vessels blockading the other channels. He expressed great indebtedness to Captain Boutelle of the Coast Survey, whose services had

been important. Under further orders, on the 5th of December Commander Drayton again revisited those waters in the Pawnee, accompanied by the Unadilla, Isaac Smith, and Coast Survey steamer Vixen. He extended his observations up the Ashepoo River to the entrance of Mosquito Creek, where the inland route to Charleston commenced. A day or so thereafter he continued up the river and landed on Hutchinson's Island; two days earlier the negro houses, overseer's house, and outbuildings had been burned by the enemy. An attempt had been made at the same time to drive off the negroes, many of whom had escaped into the woods, and he was told that many of their number had been shot in attempting to escape. "The scene was one of complete desolation; the smoking ruins and cowering figures which surrounded them, who still instinctively clung to their hearthstones, although there was no longer shelter for them, presented a most melancholy sight, the impression of which was made even stronger by the piteous wailing of the poor creatures, a large portion of whom consisted of the old and decrepit." The vessels left soon after dark, when a bright signal light was burned on the place to announce to the enemy the departure of the vessels.

The following morning Commander Drayton went up the Coosaw River with his command. Soon after leaving, the Unadilla was disabled by the breaking of a cross-head; the two other vessels proceeded. Off Fort Heyward, before described but not named, the Isaac Smith was left, her size not permitting her to go farther with safety. Commander Drayton proceeded in the Vixen to the entrance of Beaufort Creek, known as the "Brick-yards," where a fort was said to be. The plantation of Mr. Blythewood was visited, where a great number of negroes was seen. Here the cotton-house with its contents had just been burned, and all of the slaves

that could be caught had been driven away. Many of them that remained begged to be taken away, as they had neither shelter nor food. They were permitted to go on board of the vessel. Leaving the blockading force, the Pawnee then returned to Port Royal, and Flag-Officer Dupont informed the Navy Department that he would hold Otter Island and Tybee Roads by a naval force until it was convenient for the army to occupy the islands, when several of the vessels could be sent to other points for blockading purposes.

At the same time, Commander C. R. P. Rodgers was making a reconnoissance of Warsaw Sound with the gunboats Ottawa, Seneca, and Pembina. This force left Tybee Roads on December 5th, and approaching the fort on Warsaw Island found it abandoned. It was octagonal in form, with platforms for eight guns on the water faces; the land faces were protected by an abatis. The guns had been removed, the magazine blown up, and the platforms destroyed. Adjoining the work, huts and sheds for a large garrison had not yet been removed.

From the mouth of Wilmington River, another work on the river was sighted, bearing north 60° west, distant about three miles; this was surrounded by a large encampment. Five guns, apparently of large calibre, were mounted on the face of the battery toward the river; only one gun was visible on the other face.

The Henry Andrew was added to the force, and Commander Rodgers crossed Ossabaw Bar and examined the Great Ogeechee and Vernon Rivers. An earthwork of eight guns, not yet completed, was seen on the eastern end of Green Island; seventy-five tents were counted and a derrick was seen for the work in progress. This fort commanded Vernon River, the Little Ogeechee, Hell Gate, and the passage from Vernon River into the Great Ogeechee. From a distance

of two nautical miles a rifle shell was thrown at the Seneca, which fell astern ; another, a heavy smooth-bore, fired at the Pembina fell far short.

On the 15th of December Commander Drayton crossed the North Edisto Bar. An earthwork was seen on the west side facing the bar, and shells were thrown into it without a reply. The works proved to be two abandoned redoubts for five guns each, connected by a long curtain, and protected in the rear by a double fence of thick plank, with earth between, and loopholed. The guns and platforms had been removed. The Seneca proceeded several miles up the river, when on all sides cotton-houses and outbuildings were set on fire. Many of these fires were miles in the interior, and were known only by the dense volumes of white smoke rising above the pine forests that outlined the horizon. Their property was far beyond the reach of molestation, even had a design existed. Such conduct indicated the actual insanity that reigned among the inhabitants in the region, and the terror inspired by the bombardment of the forts at Port Royal.

Escaped slaves reported a Confederate force of 500 men at Rockville, a handsome-looking village on a bluff about three miles distant. Captain Drayton determined to pay them a visit at daylight and went on board of the Vixen for that purpose, taking with him marines and armed boat crews from the Pawnee and the Seneca. The Vixen got aground in the creek, which prevented her reaching the town until 8 A.M. of the 18th. Fifty men were landed, there being no sign of life on the wharf. On reaching the town large numbers of the blacks were found pillaging commissary stores.

A deserted encampment was found one mile from the water, the troops having left when they saw the vessels en-

tering the creek. The blacks were found "as busy as bees," and had already possessed themselves of what they found in camp. Forty-four Sibley tents were taken on board the Vixen.

In relation to this, Colonel John L. Branch, whose encampment was visited, reported as follows: "On Tuesday the 17th, at 4.30 P.M., it was reported to me that four of the enemy's vessels had crossed the bar or were in sight and firing shells. I at once prepared to make observations for myself and saw the vessels, one considerably in advance of the others, coming up the Edisto River. I ordered the regimental line to be formed without knapsacks and marched out of camp, supposing that a fire of shells would at once be opened upon it. This was not done, however, and the advanced steamer continued up the river, while others stopped near the entrance to Bohicket Creek."

"On this river, and the several bold creeks connected therewith, are many places where troops could be landed, and by a forced march to our rear gain possession of the only two bridges connecting Wadmelaw with John's Island, and thereby cut off my entire command, two hundred and ninety-two rifles. . . . It is needless to say that had no demonstration been made to cut us off from John's Island, no retreat, save beyond the reach of the enemy's shells, would have been ordered, unless a very heavy force had been landed at Rockville." He further states that the "activity and energy of the quartermaster deserve the highest commendation," and that the losses sustained were due to insufficient means of transportation.

Several hundreds of slaves who had collected on board of the vessels were sent on shore and located themselves in the wood near the earthworks on the southeast end of Edisto Island, and for their protection and the maintenance of a

more effective blockade, the Penguin, Lieutenant-Commander Budd, was brought into the harbor.

This colony maintained itself for months, eventually reaching more than one thousand in number, although those that desired were taken to Port Royal by the gunboats when going. Corn that had been housed and sweet potatoes that had been buried, and an occasional supply of beef from cattle that they would look up on the island, were quite sufficient to supply their simple wants throughout the winter, and the branches of trees and palmetto leaves placed over poles served them for shelter in true Arcadian simplicity.

Returning to Port Royal, the Pawnee visited the southwest end of the island, where an abandoned earthwork of two redoubts was found. These had been armed with eight guns.

A great deal was said by the enemy and by his putative friends in Great Britain of the sinking of a "stone fleet" on December 20, 1861, in what was termed the main ship channel to Charleston Harbor, and, a month later, in Sullivan Island Channel. It was assumed that these vessels would "destroy the harbor." The official reports of the enemy, obstructing channels by sinking vessels before that time wherever it suited his purposes, made the complaint ridiculous.

It was at most a temporary embarrassment to blockade-runners that had a sufficient draught to require an actual channel; nearly all of them could pass over any part of the bar near high water, except "Drunken Dick" shoal, which lies within a half mile of Sullivan's Island. As the sea here breaks at all times, it might be regarded rather as a guide than a danger. The range lights, one on Sumter and the other on St. Michael's Church, gave a fair guide into the harbor, even when not running on the range.

In the immediate vicinity where the "stone fleet" was sunk, a better channel than had existed at any recent period was at once formed a little south of east of Lighthouse Inlet. So, too, in the narrow inlets where vessels had been sunk by either of the combatants, a wash soon opened a deeper channel than existed before the obstruction had been placed. Finally, it may be said, every one acquainted with those waters knew that a few months at least would be sufficient for the *teredo navalis* (marine worm) to dispose of any timber that might be placed as an obstruction.

While the navy had been busy as above described, and in maintaining a blockade at the many entrances required, the army had completed a very large and strongly intrenched camp on Hilton Head, which surrounded Fort Walker. It had also occupied Beaufort, and picketed the whole of Port Royal Island, upon which the town is situated, as also the whole of Hilton Head Island, and had established a post on Tybee and other islands.

The enemy had somewhat recovered from the heavy blow of the battle of Port Royal, and the forced abandonment of so many earthworks that had been constructed with so much labor. But he was by no means idle, and had formed the design of swooping down suddenly and capturing a regiment or more of National troops occupying Beaufort and the island of Port Royal. For this purpose he supposed a necessary preliminary was to place obstructions at Seabrook's Point, on Whale Branch, two and a half miles from the ferry, on the one side, and at Boyd's Neck, on the Coosaw, five miles below the ferry, to prevent the ascent of gunboats; then by constructing a heavy battery at Port Royal Ferry and another on the shore opposite Seabrook's Point, he could cross a sufficient force rapidly and sweep over Port Royal Island. Many of

the slaves that had been driven off had returned, and among them were spies sent by their masters to keep the enemy informed as to the number and disposition of the National troops, and there were yet others who visited the main stealthily, and watched the movements of the enemy with anxiety and were informed, too, by slaves who were probably in the Confederate camps.

Apprised of this intended movement on the part of the enemy, General Sherman sent to Flag-Officer Dupont a confidential letter, stating that the time had come for action, and requested a naval quota to second the army movement.

A conference was had and Commander C. R. P. Rodgers detailed to command the naval forces, consisting of the Ottawa and Pembina gunboats, the armed tug Hale and four boats of the Wabash armed with howitzers, under charge of Lieutenants Upshur, Luce, Irwin, and Acting Master Kempff, which force was to enter the Coosaw by the Beaufort River, and the Seneca and other gunboats to move as a co-operative force up Broad River, and entering Whale Branch attack a battery supposed to be placed opposite Seabrook's Point, and from thence go on to attack, as an auxiliary force, the enemy's batteries at Port Royal Ferry. The part assigned to the force first named was to protect the troops landing first at Heyward's plantation, to cover the march of the advancing column to the second point of debarkation of troops, and then to attack the batteries.

The attack was fixed for the 1st of January; the vessels first named, under the immediate command of Commander Rodgers, remained at Beaufort until dark and then ascended the river until within two miles of the Coosaw, where they anchored until daylight. At 4 A.M. Commander Rodgers moved on with the launches, and at daylight joined General Stevens, commanding the army forces, in Mulligan's Creek,

where the general had secured a number of flats; the gunboats followed at early daylight. The troops having embarked in the creek and passed into the Coosaw, through the Brick-yard Creek to the first landing, at 8 A.M., the first detachment landed on Chisholm's Island with two light navy howitzers and their crews, under cover of the gunboats that had in the meantime come up. The landing was made on the north bank of the Coosaw, four miles below the ferry. The embarked troops and the naval force then proceeded to the second point of debarkation, higher up at Adams's plantation, where they arrived at 10 A.M. At that point the gunboats anchored, and they and the launches covered the debarkation, during which time Commander Rodgers went on board of the Hale, and to within range of the battery of the enemy at Port Royal Ferry, on Chisholm's Island, into which shells were thrown. This fire dislodged troops lying in an adjoining field, but no response came from the battery.

At 1.30 P.M. the troops moved toward Port Royal Ferry, the gunboats and launches shelling the woods in advance of the skirmish line, and then advancing rapidly shelled the batteries and anchored in front of it at 2.30 P.M. On visiting the work Commander Rodgers found the enemy had carried off all of the guns save one. He was followed almost immediately by the troops that had marched along the banks of the Coosaw. A quantity of VIII-inch and 30-pounder rifled shells were found in the magazine.

The Seneca and the Ellen had in the meantime entered Whale Branch, and after ascending two miles, Captain Elliott, of the Seventy-ninth Highlanders, came on board the Seneca from Port Royal Island, and one mile higher up pointed out an earthwork at Long Point, on Barnwell's Island, at a ten-second fuse range. The channel being quite narrow the vessels anchored and shelled the work, without receiving a reply.

Captain Elliott embarked a force of 300 men in scows from a creek one mile below Seabrook, and landed on the site of the earthwork. Signals from him indicated the position of the enemy, and as requested the vessels opened fire until signal was made to discontinue. A platform for one heavy gun was in place; the incomplete earthwork was designed for a number of guns. Captain Elliott destroyed the magazine and wood-work by fire, as well as some wood that had served as a concealment.

At 2.30 Commander Rodgers, from the *Ottawa* at Port Royal Ferry, signalled the *Seneca* and *Ellen* to join him; this was effected at once by the last-named vessel, but owing to intervening shoal ground the *Seneca* could not get over until the following morning, when at 10 A.M. she, in common with the other vessels having heavy pivot guns, shelled the enemy at long range, as requested by army signals.

General Stevens wrote to the flag-officer in relation to the co-operation of Commander Rodgers as follows: "Whether regard be had to the beautiful working of the gunboats in the narrow channel of Port Royal, the thorough concert of action established through the signal-officers, or the masterly handling of the guns against the enemy, nothing remained to be desired."

The official report of the enemy gives a total of 8 killed and 24 wounded, the greater number attributed to shells from the gunboats. The result of the action was an abandonment of any future attempt on the part of the enemy to plant batteries near those waters, or to make preparations with the view of landing troops on Port Royal Island.